

Record

THE BAPTIST SPECIAL EDITION

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

124:31
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0000 2910 81238
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SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOC 5989 P1
901 COMMERCE ST STE 404
NASHVILLE
AUG 13 2010

SINCE 1877

T 12, 2010

VOL. 134

No. 31



Changed champion shares testimony

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

Todd Gould knew about the cowboy church services that were held at nearly every rodeo he attended. He just didn't care to go.

The former national high school calf roping champion from Terry was riding high on the professional rodeo circuit — literally. The drugs, alcohol, and riotous living, prevalent throughout so much of the professional sports establishment in America, had a firm grip on the young man known by family and friends for his hot temper.

"On the rodeo circuit, it's hard to find someone not living like that," said Gould, who grew up in church but found his worldly lifestyle hard to resist. Most of the rodeos in which he competed held a cowboy church service at some point, he said, but he passed on the opportunity to participate — not least because his lifestyle made it difficult to attend.

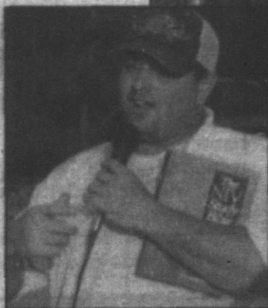
"I grew up in church. I thought I was saved. Then it hit me on Easter 2006. It was like lightning struck. I truly gave my life over to the Lord on that day and he delivered me from the drugs and alcohol," Gould said. He was 26 years old.

As for the short fuse on his temper, "People who knew me before were stunned at the change," he said.

Merle Brunson, Gould's great-uncle and himself a devoted horseman, agreed. "If you knew him before, you know he's a changed man," he said.

As Gould's rodeo days drew to a close, he returned to Terry and found a way to continue his love of all things equine. Now he and his mother Pat Higdon — a former Mississippi high school rodeo queen — train horses for barrel race competitions and calf roping at their farm on Green Gables Road. Gould also "breaks" colts, preparing young horses to take a saddle and become accustomed to being ridden.

In keeping with his life turnaround, he attends church regularly. He also got the idea of creating his own version of cowboy



FIRST THINGS FIRST — Todd Gould of Terry, national high school calf roping champion, shares his testimony at cowboy church before calf roping practice at the lighted arena on his property on Green Gables Road. Gould holds calf roping events at the arena twice a month during the summer, and starts each one with a cowboy church service. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

church to be held before each event at the lighted arena that has been built on his property so local residents — mostly young people — can practice calf roping and receive tips from the national champion.

"The Lord put it on my heart to have a cowboy church service before the roping. I started doing it in April 2009," Gould said.

Before the first calf is let loose in the arena, all the participants must sit through cowboy church and hear the Gospel presented by Gould or a special speaker he sometimes invites to the arena events. On a balmy evening in mid-July as the sun dropped slowly behind nearby woods, people listened to Gould share his testimony and urge them to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

The calf roping is held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month during the summer, and attendance often breaks 100. That's a lot of folks hearing the Good News.

On hand that July evening were Vacation Bible School participants from Lakeshore Church in Jackson. The church's theme for Vacation Bible School was Saddle Ridge Ranch, which meshed perfectly with Gould's operation. The children were thrilled to be around the dozens of horses and riders who showed up to race around the arena in pursuit of the calves.

Marsha Wood has directed VBS at Lakeshore Church for about 10 years. "The children really enjoyed their time there. It gave them the opportunity to see that missions isn't just missionaries overseas, but any Christian who is willing to share the Gospel and have a ministry right where they are," she said.

Editor's note: For more information on the cowboy church, Gould can be contacted at (601) 573-4674.

WHENEVER HE CALLS

SPECIAL EDITION

MARGARET LACKEY OFFERING FOR STATE MISSIONS



Abortion floodgates to open if law passes

WASHINGTON (BP) — A U.S. Senate committee has forwarded to the full chamber legislation that would entrench repeal of a ban on federal funds for organizations that perform or promote abortions overseas.

The Appropriations Committee approved an amendment by Sen. Frank Lautenberg, D-N.J., that would codify President Barack Obama's 2009 reversal of the Mexico City Policy. The July 29 vote in support of the overall State and Foreign Operations spending bill that included the amendment was 18-12.

If the amendment bill is passed and signed by President Obama, then a future pro-life president would not be able to reinstate the Mexico City Policy with an executive order. It would require congressional action — a much taller hurdle.

When it was in effect, the policy prohibited international family planning organizations from receiving federal funds unless they agree not to perform or counsel for abortion or lobby in order to liberalize the pro-life policies of foreign governments. Opponents call it the "global gag" rule.

Obama struck down the policy during his first week in the White House in 2009. A subsequent president could reinstate the policy, however. If Lautenberg's amendment becomes law, new congressional action and a presidential signature would be required to overturn it.

The Mexico City Policy has had a see-saw history. Initiated by President Reagan and announced at a conference in Mexico City in 1984, it remained in force until 1993, when President Clinton rescinded it on his second full day in the White House. President George W. Bush reinstated it exactly eight years later.

Only two organizations — the International Planned Parenthood Federation and Marie Stopes International — refused to abide by the Mexico City Policy during the recent years it was in effect and consequently were refused the funds, according to Democrats for Life of America. There were 650 organizations that accepted federal money under the restrictions, Democrats for Life reported.

Reaction to the committee's action broke down as expected, with pro-life advocates opposing it and pro-choice activists favoring it. Among the organizations in support of Lautenberg's amendment are Planned Parenthood Federation of America, NARAL Pro-Choice America, the ACLU, Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS), Sierra Club, the General Board of Church and Society of the United Methodist Church, and the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations.

Among the groups that back the Mexico City Policy are the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, National Right to Life, Americans United for Life, and the Family Research Council.

Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, said the spending bill includes other concerns for pro-lifers. He pointed to its inclusion of \$55 million for the United Nations Population Fund, which had its funding blocked during the final seven years of the Bush administration for its support of China's coercive population control program.

Perkins, who is not related to William Perkins, editor of The Baptist Record, also cited a \$24 million increase for the U.S. Agency for International

Development, which he said has been "illegally lobbying to legalize abortion in Kenya's new constitution."

Meanwhile, pro-life advocates have received an important assurance from the Obama administration on one aspect of the new health-care reform law — but are still seeking its repeal by Congress.

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a regulation clarifying that an interim program established under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) to cover uninsured Americans will prohibit the use of federal funds for most abortions.

The White House, however, said the rule would not necessarily apply to other programs under the far-reaching and controversial measure, which was enacted in March.

Southern Baptist ethicist Richard Land wrote, some Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives to urge support for repeal of the new health-care law in order to adopt a different form of health-care reform.

HHS released the rule July 29, putting to rest a controversy that became public when the National Right to Life Committee reported Pennsylvania's program under the Pre-existing Condition Insurance Plan (PCIP) would cover legal abortions in the state. New Mexico and Maryland also were reported to have devised plans under the PCIP that would cover elective abortions.

The PCIP, also referred to as the "high-risk pool" program, provides coverage to the uninsured who have pre-existing conditions. Under the law, \$5 billion in federal funds is authorized for states to implement such a program until "insurance exchanges" to be administered by the states go into effect in 2014.

A day after National Right to Life reported Pennsylvania's plan would cover abortions, a HHS spokeswoman said on July 14 abortion would not be covered under the PCIP except in the cases of a threat to the mother's life or in cases of pregnancy by rape or incest. Those exceptions are consistent

with other abortion-funding restrictions in federal law.

On the same day HHS affirmed that policy by means of its July 29 regulation, Health Reform Director Nancy-Ann DeParle wrote on the White House blog the ban on abortion coverage in the "high-risk pool" program "is not a precedent for other programs or policies" under the health-care law.

National Right to Life's Douglas Johnson said July 29 the Obama administration, "without blinking," had approved in at least three states' programs "that would have funded virtually all abortions" before his organization disclosed those plans.

The development shows National Right to Life was correct in March when it said there was nothing in the health-care law or in an Obama executive order — issued supposedly to allay pro-life Democrats' concerns — that "effectively prevents federal subsidies for abortion on demand," said Johnson, the organization's legislative director.

"This means that unless Congress repeals the health care law or performs major corrective surgery on it, there will be years of battles, as each new program is implemented, over how elective abortion will be covered — and the White House is suggesting that today's policy will not necessarily be applied, when implementing the other programs, some of which will cover far larger populations," Johnson said in a written statement.

The PCIP potentially could cover 400,000 people when it is implemented throughout the country.

Land, president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC), wrote members of the Blue Dog Coalition July 30 to seek their support for repeal of the health-care law, citing abortion funding as one of the ERLC's reasons for opposing the new health-care law. The Blue Dog Coalition is an alliance of 54 moderate or conservative Democrats in the House.



THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

PUBLISHED SINCE 1877

AUGUST 12, 2010

VOL. 134

No. 31



YOU CAN RESPOND:
RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

Survey: Miss. tops

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — States with the highest percentage of self-identifying political conservatives are also more likely to have a higher percentage of citizens who say religion is important to them, according to an analysis of two Gallup surveys. Additionally, the most politically liberal states are least likely to be religious. Gallup released results of a poll Aug. 2 showing Mississippi and Wyoming tied for first in having the highest percentage of self-identifying political conservatives (53%). They are followed by Utah (51%), South Dakota (50%), Alabama and North Dakota (tied at 49%) and Idaho (48%). Rounding out the top 10 are four states tied at 46%: South Carolina, Oklahoma, Nebraska, and Louisiana. Among those, five — Mississippi, Alabama, South Carolina, Oklahoma and Louisiana — were in the Top 10 of Gallup's January 2009 survey of the most religious states in America. In fact, of the 11 most conservative states, only Idaho and Wyoming are not in the Top 20 of the most religious states. The highest percentage of self-identifying liberals was found largely in the Northeast, where Rhode Island was first (32%), followed by Connecticut and Vermont (tied at 29%), Massachusetts (28%), Colorado and New York (tied at 27%), Oregon (26%), Washington and New Jersey (tied at 25%), and New Hampshire and Maryland (tied at 24%). Among that group, seven — Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, Massachusetts, Oregon, Washington and New Hampshire — were listed in the Top 10 of Gallup's least religious states. Maryland was the only state on the liberal top 10 list not to crack the least religious top 20. (It was 27th.)

Looking back

10 years ago

Super Summer 2000 on the campus of Mississippi College hosts 400 during a week of intensive discipleship and ministry training. The number includes students, youth and campus ministers serving as executive staff, and college students and youth minister who serve as team leaders.

20 years ago

A group of Illinois Baptist women is commissioned by Country Woods Church, Byram, for mission work in Mississippi as part of a partnership between the two states. The women spend a week at Crestwood Baptist Center in Jackson, conducting VBS and sorting clothing.

50 years ago

Mr. and Mrs. Victor Kaneubee, Philadelphia, are appointed missionaries with the Home Mission Board, moving to Farmington, New Mexico, where they will work with the Navajo Indians.



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Send changes of address to: The
BAPTIST RECORD, P.O. Box 530,
Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

Send news, communication, and
address changes to: The Editor,
BAPTIST RECORD, P.O. Box 530,
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VOLUME 134 • NUMBER 31
(ISSN-0005-5778)

Published weekly except weeks of July 4
and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist
Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street,
Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$10.35 per
year payable in advance. Economy plans
available for cooperating Mississippi churches.
Periodicals postage paid at Jackson, MS.
Member, Association of State Baptist Papers.
Deadlines: News items — one calendar
week prior to requested publication date.
Advertising — two calendar weeks prior to
requested publication date. All submissions
are subject to editing.

Our remarkable garden

In Mississippi Baptist life, as in
Christendom as a whole, we are the
benefactors of the sacrificial actions
and efforts of the spiritual giants who
preceded us. They planted this remark-
able Baptist garden in which we live,
then others watered it, and we live in the
blessings of their faithfulness every day.

One of those spiritual giants, among
the many Mississippi Baptists have pro-
duced, is Margaret McRae
Lackey. She was born in 1858 in
Copiah County, the fifth of
nine children born to James
and Elizabeth Lackey. She grew
up doing what most girls in
Mississippi did in that era. She
played games with her friends,
went to school, did her chores
at home, and attended church.

Margaret Lackey went on to
attend Hillman College in
Clinton, which we now know as
Mississippi College, one of our
three Baptist-affiliated institu-
tions of higher learning in the
state. She studied to be a teacher
and indeed taught for many
years in Mississippi schools.

Raised in the Baptist tradi-
tion of the day, Lackey — who never
married — had a deep love for missions
whose goal it was (and is) to spread the
Gospel message of Jesus Christ to people
who had never heard of the Savior. She
used her teaching skills to help the chil-
dren in her church learn to share her love
of missions.

She also utilized her talent as a gifted
poet and writer to help Christians under-
stand the importance of missions. She was
the author of several studies on missions.

In 1912, Margaret
Lackey became the first
paid leader of the
Mississippi Woman's
Missionary Union
(WMU). Her passion for
missions was obvious to
all who met her. She
once wrote, "Sisters, we
have done passing well
this year, but, oh, the
untouched multitudes
of women and children
in Mississippi whose
souls are crying silently
yet know not for what
they are crying."

After a storied career,
Margaret Lackey retired
in 1930 from her posi-
tion as corresponding
secretary of Mississippi
WMU. Many more
Mississippi Baptist
women, inspired by her
model life, have been
raised up by the Lord
for Kingdom service since then.

In 1903, Margaret Lackey was among
those who led Mississippi WMU to begin
a special annual observance to emphasize
the importance of state missions. That
special observance eventually turned into
the Season of Prayer for State Missions.

In 1935, the offering taken during the
Season of Prayer for State Missions was
named in honor of the woman who today
remains one of Mississippi Baptists' most
outstanding leaders: the Margaret Lackey
State Missions Offering.

Margaret McRae Lackey died in 1948
just a few days short of her 90th birthday,



Margaret Lackey

having lived during a
most memorable time in
Mississippi and American
history. As a child, she
witnessed the Civil War
and the privations of
Reconstruction. As an
adult, she lived through
World War I, the Great
Depression, and World
War II. No doubt, her life
experiences convinced
her of the importance of
bringing everyone she
could to a saving knowl-
edge of Jesus Christ.

The first state mission
offering in 1903 received
a total of \$294.38. The
2010 goal for the
Margaret Lackey State
Mission Offering is \$2
million. Miss Lackey
would be pleased to
know that the work in
which she so earnestly
believed has been carried
on in her name for these many years.

Today the Margaret Lackey State
Missions Offering encompasses a multi-
tude of important state programs, such as
Christian camping, church planting, dis-
aster relief, literacy, and volunteer mis-
sionary assistance. Gifts to the offering
make possible many of the Mississippi
Baptist programs that exist today.

Now it's our turn to tend to the gar-
den. May we be found faithful in this
and all endeavors we undertake in the
name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus
Christ, and in remembrance of spiritual
giants like Margaret Lackey.

Last week the Internet was
abuzz with news that
Anne Rice has renounced
Christianity. The best-selling
vampire novelist, who pro-
fessed faith in Christ several
years ago and has since writ-
ten several books about Jesus
and her conversion, publicly
quit Christianity on her
Facebook page.

There's a real opportunity
here that hinges on how we
respond to this or, rather, how we
respond to her.

Anne said that she was leav-
ing Christianity because she just
couldn't be "anti-gay, anti-femin-
ist," and so forth. The response
was immediate, especially on
Christian forums and comments
on blogs and on various other
forms of media.

Anne Rice is, at best, our sis-
ter-in-Christ who is going
through a dark night of the
soul. She is, at the very least,
someone who has encountered
something of the light of Christ,
is drawn to it, and is now "kick-
ing against the goads" (Acts
26:14 — pointed sticks used to
direct a draft animal).

In either case, she is not
our enemy.

The church cannot see rejection
of Christ as some kind of
personal reproach or, worse
yet, an ideological declaration
of war. We have to love our
prodigal sons and daughters
so that if and when the dark

GUEST OPINION:

Is Anne Rice our enemy?

By Russell Moore
Louisville, Ky.



night of the soul is over they
have a place to come home to.

Anne says she still loves Jesus
but she doesn't love Christianity.

Yes, I know that it is impossi-
ble to love Jesus without loving
His church. I've preached that for
years and I still believe it, but
can't you see how someone could
wrestle against that? I am thank-
ful that I had been a Christian
long enough to have gained
some kind of maturity before I
saw just how vicious
"Christianity" can be.

Jesus never snuffs out that
smoldering wick, never breaks
that bruised reed, because He
loves. Anne Rice has renounced
Christianity. Maybe it's a perma-
nent move away from the
Gospel, showing that she never
quite made it all the way into
communion with Christ. If so,
let's represent Christ and contin-
ue to point her to the Jesus she
finds in some way mystifying.

It could be that Anne is a
Christian who is having a wave
of doubt and rejection. So did
the Apostle Peter, who also
renounced Christianity and, as
a matter of fact, cursed Jesus
personally in the process — but
when Jesus finds Peter in
Galilee (right back on the fish-
ing boats where he'd been
called from in the first place!),
he never even mentions the
incident at the fireside.

A lot of us (and I include
myself in this) are a lot like
James and John in the Christ-
rejecting village. We want to call
down fire from heaven on the
opponents of Christianity (Luke
9:51-54). That seems so prophetic
and Christian and it also hap-
pens to confirm us to be right.
Jesus' response to this zeal
ought to stop us in our tracks:
"Jesus turned and rebuked
them. And they went on to
another village" (Luke 9:56).

Anne Rice hasn't rejected you.
Anne Rice hasn't betrayed you.
Would you pray for her, and for
the other smoldering wicks and
about-to-bolt potential prodigals
in your church (and maybe in
your home)? It could be Anne has
been deeply hurt by what she has
seen in Christianity or it could be
that, like Jesus' disciples, the closer
she's drawing to Christ the
more she is made uncomfortable
by it. Let's love her.

Jesus' disciples, and Peter
again, after all, were ready, it
seems, to "quit Christianity"
when on the Galilean lakeshore
after he said some disturbing
things. Jesus asked Peter, "Will
you also go away?" At the end
of it all, Peter had to confess,
"To whom shall we go? You
have the words of eternal life"
(John 6:66-67).

Maybe Anne Rice will con-
clude the same thing. In the
meantime, let's not demonize
the prodigal daughter. Let's
give her room to come home,
if and when she wants. Let's
not verify her experience of
angry, raging Christians.

Maybe it will take a vampire
novelist to teach us that Light
stings sometimes, when you're
coming out of darkness.

Moore, a Biloxi native, is dean of
the School of Theology at Southern
Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and
appears here courtesy of Baptist
Press. Edited for length.

First Person: Beware new Scientology commercials

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — We're all looking for it. Some of us have been looking our whole lives.

"Hmm ..." I'm thinking as I watch the TV commercial unfolding with beautiful music, scenes of people with searching eyes, and a warm sounding male voiceover. "I wonder what this is about."



Davis

Some think they can buy it. Some think they can wear it.

"It must be an ad for Christianity," I'm surmising. "Maybe it's presented by some evangelistic association or Christian church. It's very well done."

Some travel the world in search of it. Most don't even know what they are looking for, but we all feel it.

"Whoever made this ad must surely be Christian," I am saying to myself. "God is what we are all looking for."

That aching desire ... that unexplainable emptiness that can only be filled by one thing ... The Truth.

"Yes!" I am thinking. "This is great... so tell them how to find Jesus, whoever you are." My balloon burst.

Scientology: Know yourself ... Know life.

"Scientology?!" I said out loud incredulously. Yes, Scientology. This short ad and a number of other well-made TV commercials are now running nationwide on various cable TV networks and online challenging viewers to investigate the "life changing" system of the Church of Scientology.

Over the past couple of decades Americans have become more aware of this controversial religion primarily because of the involvement of

prominent Hollywood celebrities including Tom Cruise, John Travolta, Kirstie Alley, Priscilla Presley, and a host of others. So what is Scientology and what should Christians think about it?

In my 30-plus years of studying cults and sects few have given me more

cause for trepidation than the Church of Scientology. This bizarre movement was founded in 1954 by science fiction writer and self-proclaimed adventurer L. Ron Hubbard. Hubbard claimed that, as a boy and young man, he traveled the world searching for the answers to life's greatest questions.

According to his own story, which has been widely disputed, he eventually discovered the secrets to real life. This self-revealed epiphany led him to create a new system of enhanced mental functioning he called Dianetics. He publicly disclosed this fanciful scheme in his 1950 book, *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health*, which quickly became a best seller.

Soon after that he coined the term Scientology as a brand name for his novel ideas.

Consequently, Hubbard's theories were strongly condemned by the mental health establishment as unscientific and dangerous. Undaunted, he looked for more effective ways to market his concepts, so he decided to create a new religion. In 1954 he established the Church of Scientology, over which he reigned as a living Messiah-like figure until his death in 1986.

Today Hubbard is still remembered with reverence by Scientologists and his books are regarded virtually as inspired scripture.

So, you ask, what does Scientology teach, what is its appeal, and why is it so controversial? In Hubbard's early works he described what he construed as the reasons for all of mankind's problems. He origi-

nally taught that we are all born with a clean slate mind which, beginning at infancy, becomes infected with negative subconscious impulses he called engrams.

These engrams, the result of negative traumatic events in our childhood and youth, adversely determine our mental and physical health the rest of our lives. Hubbard did not have a personal concept of deity, so in his system mankind's problem is not moral sin against a Holy God but bad programming, so to speak.

Hubbard designed a system of therapy (Dianetics) which he claimed could, over the course of time, completely expunge all negative engrams from our minds, leading to a full and happy life. The goal of the Dianetics process is to attain a state of being he called Clear. Learning and practicing this process, called Auditing, is the basis for the Church of Scientology.

Scientology, as do most non-Christian religions, gives patronizing credit to Jesus Christ. He is not the unique Son of God, just an example of someone who has reached Clear. Hubbard maintained that, through ancient mental processes similar to modern Scientology, Jesus discovered his latent superhuman potential, as did other great teachers, philosophers, and heroes in history.

Hubbard eventually realized that his Dianetics treatments were not always (if ever) successful. Therefore, he concluded that the Hindu concept of reincarnation is true. Thus, he asserted, not only do we have to deal with engrams from this life, but we also carry in our minds and bodies negative influences from our many previous lives.

Hubbard maintained that, even if we reach Clear, we will still need additional Auditing to gain victory over those still extant negative forces. What the commercials fail to state, of course, is that as one progresses through the process, the Auditing sessions get increasingly expensive and must continue throughout one's life.

For some reason, this never-ending quest for per-

fection appeals to many intelligent and talented people. Thus, a number of show business luminaries regularly visit the church's Celebrity Centre International in Hollywood.

The Centre features a first class hotel, fine dining, and naturally, special Auditing designed for its wealthy clientele.

You may ask, "So what? Scientology, though certainly not a usual form of mental health therapy and maybe a bit strange, doesn't sound all that bad. Why should Christians be concerned about it? After all, there are lots of other ideas out there that sound crazier than that."

Maybe so, but Scientology goes much further than its basic ideas as outlined above. For one thing, once someone reaches the basic state of Clear and begins further study and auditing, they slowly learn Hubbard's advanced teachings about the creation of the human race, the nature of mankind, the history of the universe, etc.

To say Hubbard's ideas on these points are bizarre, at best, is an understatement. For instance, Hubbard taught that about 75 million years ago the galaxy was once under the control of an evil ruler named Xenu who sent rebellious subjects to a prison planet called Teegeeack (now called Earth) where they were destroyed by H-bombs.

Their spirits, called Thetans, still survive and attach themselves to living persons who must work (using Scientology, obviously) to remove their influences from their lives.

"Whoa," you say. "Where did all that come from?" The answer

is simple, from the highly active science fiction imagination of L. Ron Hubbard. Yet, committed Scientologists believe it is true.

The Bible, of course, presents a far different story of man's history and way of salvation.

Another troublesome aspect of Scientology is its unethical control over its membership, particularly those on the church's staff. One such executive staffer for fifteen years was Karen Pressley.

Working at the church's headquarters near Los Angeles, she personally witnessed how lower level staff were regularly mistreated by church leaders. As a result of the prayers of her mother and others, eventually Karen left the organization and found Jesus Christ as her Lord and Savior.

Karen now works as a writer and speaker and has a ministry to help ex-cultists.

Yes, Scientology has beautiful commercials and lofty promises but the truth is far from the paradise they portray. The real answers to life's questions are not in some faddish therapy, SciFi religion, or "knowing yourself." They are only found in the One who claimed to be The Way, the Truth, and the Life, Jesus Christ.

Davis is interfaith evangelism coordinator for the North American Mission Board (NAMB) in Alpharetta, Ga. NAMB will host free workshops on Scientology featuring Karen Pressley and Tal Davis in Alpharetta on Sept. 17th and Brentwood, Tn., on Oct. 15-16. For more information, visit www.4truth.net or call (770) 410-6322.

SCIENTOLOGY
KNOW YOURSELF. KNOW LIFE.

Missions volunteer from Va. killed in Kenya automobile accident

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Robert "Bob" Finck, a 51-year-old missions volunteer from Fellowship Community Church in Salem, Va., was killed on the morning of Aug. 9, in an automobile accident in Zambia, west of the capital city of Lusaka.

International Mission Board (IMB) missionary Melissa Frady of Tennessee, accompanied by church team leader Tim Rogers, was driving Finck to a hospital after he reported

experiencing severe kidney stone pain. The truck went off the road in Kafue National Park. Finck was thrown from the vehicle and died at the scene. Frady and Rogers received bruises and scrapes.

The accident occurred about 2 a.m. Monday in a remote area of the park. Rogers stayed at the scene, while Frady walked along the road until she flagged down a driver to take her toward Lusaka, where she was able to

pick up a cell phone signal and call for help.

Finck, Rogers, and five other volunteers from Fellowship Community Church arrived in Zambia Aug. 6 and planned to stay until Aug. 14 to lead a Bible conference and minister to youth and children. They were about five hours from the capital when Finck asked to be taken to the hospital.

One of the team members reported over the weekend that three local people had made

decisions to accept Christ as Savior. Fellowship Community Church, which will celebrate its 10th anniversary Aug. 11, was planning to have the Zambia team call in to report on their mission trip during the special service.

Stephanie Painter, the church's director of missions, described Finck as passionate about missions and heavily involved in local and overseas ministry projects.

"He was very passionate

about Zambia," said Painter, noting that this was his third trip to the country. "He was very involved. Sometimes he'd come in the office and we'd share mission trip stories.

"He was always stepping up to the plate," she added. "He was a special guy.... Everything about him was special."

Finck is survived by his wife Sandi and three children — Amanda, 21; Brenna, 16; and Hunter, 10. Funeral arrangements are pending.

BIBLIOCIPHER

By Charles Marx, 1932 - 2004
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AED, EP E MEYY NASN
AT NSHHJ NEYY E XVDT,
MASN EL NASN NV
NATT? PYYYYM NAVO
DT.
ZVAC NMTCNJ-VCT:
NMTCNJ-NMV

Clue: Z = J

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: John Twenty-One: Twenty-Two

FLOWERPOTS

Recently I was at the Growing Churches Conference in central Mississippi. I walked into the dining hall where the leaders of the conference were being fed, instructed, encouraged, and prayed for, and I sat down at the table with a group of leaders. As I surveyed the room, I noticed not only a wonderful bunch of folks who were participating and leading various conferences but I noticed how well everything had been prepared on the tables. Obviously, somebody had given a lot of thought, preparation and attention into setting the room up.

The basic centerpiece was a pot of growing, blooming flowers. Since it was a Growing Churches Conference, I thought, "How neat!" Then I noticed at my table the pot had been turned over. It was on its side. I started to reach up and set it back up, but I thought I might better just leave it alone. Then I noticed at another table the same problem — the pot was on its side. In fact, I could not see one pot sitting upright. All of them were tipped over and then I noticed that there was one or two that were cracked or broken. Then I began to realize that surely someone did not come in and turn all of the pots over, but there must be some method and meaning behind these centerpiece presentations.

Not being smart enough to figure out these kinds of things, I waited until a break time and asked some of the ladies who I thought were probably a part of either setting it up, having it done, or at least would know what was going on with the pots. I asked, "Why are all of the pots turned over on their side or messed up?" The lady explained to me that the centerpieces were symbols, living metaphors of what the conference was about. I waited for more explanation. She said, "Well, everything does not have to be perfect in order for you to grow."

I led some of the breakout sessions, sat through some of the breakout sessions, and enjoyed them. Among the take-aways from the conference that I had fixed in my heart was you can grow even when the world around you is not perfect. You can grow even when the pot you are stuck in may be turned

over. You can still bloom. What a message for all of us.

Think about it from a personal standpoint. Is your life perfect? Is your job ideal? Is your mate without flaws? Are your children the absolute embodiment of everything that you want them to be? Are your mom and dad stellar examples of everything you wished they would be? You can spend the bulk of your life pointing at all of the tippy-turvy experiences that have left you wondering, wanting, and unable to excel because of

(you fill in the blank). You can spend all of your time and expend all of your energy on all of the tipped-over pot moments you have experienced in life and miss out on the bulk of what God wants to do in your life. You may not grow and may not ever bloom because somebody tipped you over. Don't do that! Get up, get on with the goodness of God, and let Him use you!

Some of you may think that you do not have enough education to teach the Word of God to people. Do you think that possibly what you know, coupled with some prayer and study, could be used by God to teach a group of young women or young men better than nobody doing it could? Some of you do not think that your voice is trained, beautiful, or capable of singing but that really is not the issue. The blessing of God's Spirit flowing through you and the music far exceeds the sounds you make. Beyond that, if you have ever listened to Willie Nelson you know that he has made millions singing that way. You can bless many by praising God. I do not know how your flower pot may have been knocked over but go ahead and let God work

Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

through you, grow through you, and bloom through you.

The same thing applies to a congregation. Your church may not be perfect, but it can make a difference. It can grow. It can have a strong witness even though it may have been tipped over or tampered with by Satan's hooligans. Through the years, I have known so many people who have spent the majority of their time and much of their spiritual energy looking for the perfect church. Now the perfect church is usually measured as being one that agrees with you exactly or does whatever you want them to do. If you join a church that you believe is ideal with the right doctrinal stance, a great vision, and wonderful sweet people, in a short period of time you will sadly discover that these are real people. They are not celestial beings as you thought, and some of them — in fact, a lot of them — have had their flower pot knocked over.

It is an old but maybe ageless story about the fellow that was shipwrecked. He was washed up on a deserted island. He started making the best he could out of life. He began to build a village — a house, a store, and a church. Years later when he was found he was so elated to be rescued, but the people were interested in the town that he had built and the community he had established. He took them around and showed them the various places. After showing them one church building, he then showed them another church house down the road. Realizing that he was the only person on the island, someone asked, "What happened to the other church?" He replied, "They could not get along. They finally split and this

church started." If you find a church that appears to be perfect, one that has no challenges, trials, or difficulties, whatever you do do not disrupt them. Do not join that church because you will probably be the biggest disrupter in the congregation.

Honestly, there are no perfect churches. There are no pastors without deficiencies and no fellow believers who will not disagree with you at times or maybe disappoint you. Every person in the church and the body of believers collectively all have experienced their flower pot being broken, bent, cracked, or knocked on its side. In just a practical way, let me add that it would be helpful if you looked at life and its various components in this same fashion.

There are no perfect jobs, no perfect workers, no perfect bosses, no perfect timeframes, and no perfect responses. That does not mean that God cannot do wonderful things in providing for you, blessing you, using you, and touching other people with you. If you will look at your place of work, in your church, in your marriage, and in your social relationships, you will see someone who may be producing a beautiful bouquet of flowers but their flower pot is on its side. As you look at them and realize how remarkable it is that they are where they are and are able to produce what they produce, thank God. Then realize that they are probably looking at you and thanking God for what His grace is producing in your life.

The author can be contacted at jfutral@mbcb.org.

MS POSITIONS

CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH
Braxton, Ms is currently accepting resumes through August 31, 2010, for Bi-vocational Minister of Youth. Please mail resumes to: Calvary Baptist Church - Youth Search Committee - P. O. Box 111 - Braxton, Ms 39044 or email to: resumes@calvaryofbraxton.com.

LIBERTY BAPTIST CHURCH, Flowood, MS, is accepting applications for the position of Ministry Assistant to the Pastor and Congregation. Basic office and computer skills. Ability with Pagemaker and MediaShout are a plus. Send resume to 5199 Lakeland Dr. Flowood, MS 39232. Attn: Personnel Committee or email to ofc@lbcflowood.org.

THE WAY COMMUNITY CHURCH of Winston County is seeking a Bi-vocational Pastor for a contemporary style of worship. The qualified candidate will meet the requirements of 1 Timothy 3 and 1 Peter 5. Please mail resumes to P. O. Box 1123, Louisville, Ms, 39339 or call Tim at 662-803-9574. Visit us on Facebook.

MEDICAL TRANSCRIPTIONIST available to work in your office or my home in the Mid Mississippi Delta. Twenty years experience in Orthopedic Surgery, Neurology, Gastroenterology, Family Practice, Internal Medicine, etc. Please call 662-335-2862 or e-mail Wciba@tccinfo.com.

TERRY'S CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH, 1147 Church Road, Magnolia, MS 39652 is seeking a part-time youth minister. Please contact Rev. Todd Sumrall at 601-542-1144.

CLASSIFIED ADS

SENIOR PASTOR BALLWIN BAPTIST Church is seeking a full-time conservative pastor. Seminary and pastoral experience required. Send resume to Ballwin Baptist Church; PO Box 3446; Ballwin, MO 63022.

CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH is currently accepting resumes through Oct. 29, 2010, for a full-time experienced Southern Baptist pastor. Mail resume to Calvary Baptist Church, Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 740236, Tusculum, AL 35674.

GATLINBURG CABIN FOR RENT: 2 bd/2ba, full kitchen, great view of National Pk. \$95/night. 832-922-0401 / pdw4760@att.net

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THE BAPTIST RECORD

SPECIAL EDITION

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

AUGUST 12, 2010

Teaching adults to read opens new horizons

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor

Imagine a world where words on a page are gibberish, road signs are incomprehensible, and reading a map is impossible. Such was the world of Robert Sprouse.

Sprouse, 60, was unable to read until about two years ago. Then he was introduced to Donna Daulton at Bayou Talla Fellowship, Kiln campus. Since that meeting, Sprouse has learned to read, giving him opportunities he never had before.

Daulton is part of a ministry called Teaching Adults to Read, also known as ARW (Adult Reading and Writing). This program, which is available through the North American Mission Board (NAMB), is designed to help adults learn to read. "I work with students to teach them to read but I also train others to be tutors to work with students, starting where they are and bringing them toward their goals, whatever they are, and that varies widely with the student. There is also an English as a Second Language component (ESL)."

From there, Daulton "simply wants to grow it," she said. "More tutors, more students, more ESL classes." Daulton has been working in this ministry for two years, three months.

"I was sitting at home and my son was telling me there was a reading program at the church," Sprouse said. "So he made a way for me to get here, and I met Donna. I could write, but I couldn't read. That has cost me a lot of grief during my

life. We started out meeting three times a week, then moved to two." Sprouse was Daulton's first student and has been a student for two years.

"Before that, I couldn't even read road signs. I couldn't read a map. I would go to a restaurant, and I couldn't read the menu. I would order a hamburger or a hot dog. Now I can read the Bible — my favorite book."

Sprouse states that he's learned quite a bit. "Even my kids can tell a big difference in me. You'd have to walk a mile in my shoes to understand. A person who can read real well — he's got the world. A person who can't read is just lost. I've been blessed. I worked in a high tech job, with computers, for 22 years and was able to retire. I couldn't read a lick, but I had enough common sense to get by."

Daulton says that if someone is interested in being a tutor, they should contact her, and basic training could be arranged. (Those in the Kiln area can reach her at adultlearning@bayoutalla.com.) "I believe that tutor/student matches are divinely made, so that is important." Then time could be arranged between the tutor and student, ideally twice a week. Daulton uses curriculum by Frank Laubach — "there is nothing better," she said — but she depends heavily on the Bible. "It is a major, integral, absolute must," she stated. "Funding for this work is available," she continued, "but people will say, 'Is the Bible essen-

~ Continued on ML Page 2

WHENEVER
HE CALLS

... Be prepared
in season and out ...



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of the resurrection and the kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; endure hardship; with gentleness and careful instruction, for the time will come when they will be judged, with sound doctrine. Instead of sinning and desiring, they will gather around them a great number of teachers, to whom they will say, "We want to hear from you." They will turn their eyes away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all seasons, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry. (2 Timothy 4:1-5)

JUST FOR THE RECORD



7. First Church, Columbus



8. Silver Creek Church, McComb



9. Carraway ordination



10. Corinth Church, Tallahatchie County



MISSISSIPPI BAPTISTS

1. Calvary Church, Columbia, sent 29 campers to Centrifuge and Centri-Kid in Jackson. There were four professions of faith.
2. Glade Church, Laurel, will host Annette Herndon in concert Aug. 29, 6 p.m. A love offering will be received.
3. Cedar View Church, Olive Branch, will host a community singing Aug. 21, 6 p.m., featuring the Bluff City Quartet.
4. Moselle Memorial Church, Moselle, will host Todd Agnew and Joy Whitlock in concert Aug. 22, 10 a.m. Free admission.
5. Mt. Carmel Church, Klein, will host a potluck lunch Aug. 29 following morning worship and will have a concert featuring The Sistrunk Sisters, 2 p.m. A love offering will be received.
6. Pearson Church, Pearl, will host a fish fry and an old-time gospel sing featuring Harmony and Grits Aug. 14, 5 p.m. Requested donation for fish fry, \$10; a love offering will be received for the musicians.
7. Seventeen members of First Church, Columbus, went on an 11-day mission trip in June to Corumba, Brazil. The group included a medical team, a children's team, evangelistic team, women's ministry team, and construction team. Shown are the participants.
8. The youth group of Silver Creek Church, McComb, attended youth week June 7 - 11 at Central Hills Retreat. Shown are the participants.
9. New Haven Church, Choctaw County, recently ordained Thomas H. Carraway into the gospel ministry. Shown are pastor Jim Ballard, Carraway, Helen Carraway, and Steve Jordan.
10. Corinth Church, Tallahatchie County, sent a group of 18 members on a mission trip to Long Beach July 18 - 24. The group worked on three different projects across the Gulf Coast. Shown are the participants.



11. Mt. Olivet Church, Scott County



12. The Burks



13. First Church, Brooklyn

11. Mt. Olivet Church, Scott County, recently held a spring tea party/evangelistic effort for girls. Fourteen girls and 14 adults attended. Shown are the participants.
12. South 28th Avenue Church, Hattiesburg, honored pastor Gregory Burks and his wife with a 35th wedding anniversary party Aug. 15. Shown are the Burks.
13. The youth of First Church, Brooklyn, recently participated in a mission trip to Florida. Shown are the participants.

Visit us online at
www.mbc.org
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Mississippi Baptist
opportunities.

WORKING FOR STATE MISSIONS

g Allocations : \$2,000,000



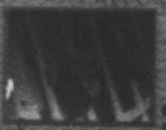
CWJC/CMJC \$30,000

Each of the 15 CWJC/CMJC sites in Mississippi helps men and women move from dependency to self-sufficiency by obtaining job and life skills. Last year 274 participants last year were involved in Bible study and paired with a Christian mentor as they made this journey. Margaret Lackey provides leadership development, resources and promotion for this ministry. For more information, call Tammy Anderson at (800) 748-1651, ext. 323, or (601) 292-3323.



NEW CHURCH STARTS \$175,000

Depending on where you live in our state, 44-64% of the population is unchurched. The single most effective evangelism strategy for reaching them is church planting. Last year, Mississippi Baptists provided support for 25 planters, including two new church starts. For more information, call Ed Deuschle at (800) 748-1651, ext. 224, or (601) 292-3224.



CRIMINAL JUSTICE MINISTRIES \$50,000

Over 250,000 people in Mississippi are impacted every year by crime as victims, offenders or family members. Margaret Lackey trains and helps resource prison ministry volunteers who work in state correction facilities and local jails. For more information, call Charles Jones at (662) 721-0264 or John Henry at (601) 508-0293.



CROSS CULTURAL EVANGELISM \$20,000

Mississippi Baptists worship in seven different languages every Sunday. Thirty-seven percent of our population is African American. Choctaw and Hispanic live next door. Margaret Lackey gifts help provide leadership training and mission strategy development for every culture. For more information, call David Michel at (800) 748-1651, ext. 231, or (601) 292-3231.



LANGUAGE/DEAF MINISTRY \$20,000

An estimated 64% of the adult population in Mississippi cannot read well enough to fill out a job application—or to read God's Word. Sharing the Gospel with those learning to read English, or the hearing impaired is important to Mississippi Baptists. Margaret Lackey trained 194 communication specialists who ministered to more than 850 people last year. For more information, call Paula Smith at (800) 748-1651, ext. 335, or (601) 292-3336 or Jim Booth at (601) 201-3361.



VOLUNTEER MISSIONARY ASSISTANCE \$625,000

Missions exists because almost six billion people do not worship Jesus Christ. Margaret Lackey scholarships helped send more than 3,000 short-term mission volunteers to nearly sixty nations last year, resulting in more than 20,000 professions of faith. For more information, call Ken Rhodes at (800) 748-1651, ext. 239, or (601) 292-3219.

State mission offering reaches world through seafarer ministry

By Erica Hagar
Correspondent

The guestbook on the counter inside the Seamen's Center in Pascagoula is filled with signatures from Mexico, Russia, Ukraine, and the Philippines. It's just another typical day at the center, according to Adrian Turner, director of the center.

When seafarers see Turner, they shout "Father" or "Pastor," just a sign of how much they appreciate his presence at the port.

"The seamen's ministry is able to reach out beyond just one or two people. We reach countries we never go to," he said.

Adrian and his wife Frances operate two different seamen's centers, one on the east side of Pascagoula and another on the west side. Charles Corey directs the Gulfport center, which has relocated to the second floor of the U.S. Post Office downtown since the former center was destroyed during Hurricane Katrina.

In the last twelve months, 7,000 seafarers came into the two Pascagoula centers alone, representing 37 countries. "I learned early on that this ministry was about more than giving cookies and drinks to the seafarers. It's about taking the Gospel to countries all over the world," Adrian said.

The center offers free Bibles to seafarers in their native languages as well as DVDs of the Jesus Film, a two hour presentation of the life of Jesus.

"It's exciting to see a seaman who sees something in his heart lan-

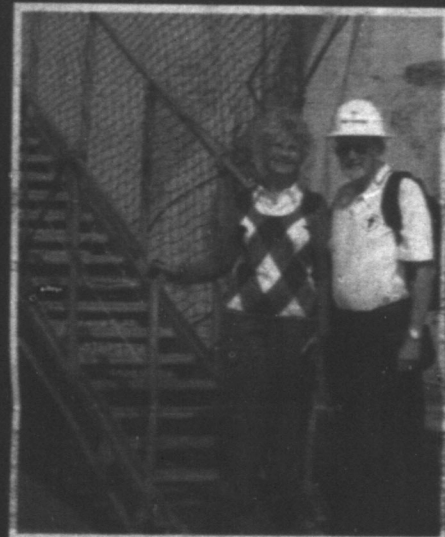
guage. He gets so excited that we're able to provide that for him," Frances said. "Sometimes we're able to give them materials they can't even get in their own country," she added.

In addition to providing spiritual resources, the center also offers a facility for the seamen to enjoy in the evenings. Open from 6 p.m. - 9 p.m., seafarers take advantage of the center's amenities, including a game room, kitchen, computer hookup, and phone room where they can purchase international calling cards. Since the average term at sea is nine months, communication home is a special gift.

"They go to sea not because they want to see the world, but to provide for their families. We'll ask them, 'What's the hardest part about your job?' and without exception, they all answer, 'Being away from our family,'" Adrian said.

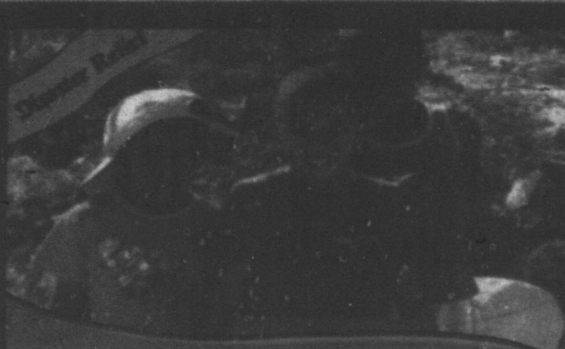
"We meet their physical needs like taking them to Wal-mart and helping them call home so they'll respond spiritually," Frances said.

For those on board that have not obtained an American visa, stepping off the boat is not an option. Instead, the Turners go to them.



"We take a cell phone on the ship for them to use. One time, a seafarer needed a pair of shoes, so we took a digital camera to the store and took pictures of several shoes, brought the camera on board, let

~ Continued on Page 4



God called out over 200 disaster relief missionaries to Haiti, Yezoo City, & Corinto

Margaret Lackey Offering for State Missions



God called over 300 missions to Haiti, in China through black parties, crusades and health fairs

Margaret Lackey Offering for State Missions

MARGARET LACKEY OFFER

Continued from ML Page 1 —



tail? Well, yes it is, so I've had to turn down some potential funding."

"I tell my tutors that I expect them to begin and end every tutoring session with prayer," Daulton continued. "Building a relationship is as important as the ABC's. It's that relationship that motivates a student when it gets tough." Turning to Sprouse, she asked, "Does it ever get tough?"

"I haven't found it easy yet," Sprouse said, laughing. "From the time I walk in that door until the time I leave, it's tough."

"There are certain benchmarks each student has to reach," said Daulton. "And you can tell. You really have to tough it out. And then, it

just clicks — they can read. But they have to deal with those plateaus."

At one point, Sprouse drove out into the country just to get himself lost. Then, by reading a map — something he had not been able to do — he was able to find his way back home. "I drove for about an hour, an hour-and-a-half," said Sprouse. "Then I got a map that showed me where I was, and I made it back."

"I had one big goal in my life, and that was to be able to read music," said Sprouse. "I bought a banjo, and I can now use three fingers to pick, because I bought a book that I can read that taught me how to read music. I read the book

over and over and learned what I needed to. And I love to cook, and I can cook so much more because now I can read recipes."

Sprouse said that now he is able to go to the doctor by himself. "Before, I had to take my daughter or son to help me fill out forms. Now I can fill them out and hand them right in. And I can read the labels on medicine bottles that tell me how to take my pills."

Funds from the Margaret Lackey Offering for State Missions go toward training individuals as trainers in ARW. Lackey funds also help buy training materials and expenses used toward ARW workshops.

Offering Goal: \$2

COMMUNITY MISSION PROJECTS \$175,000



Six out of 10 Missisippians are unchurched. Associational Mission Directors identify these people and design evangelistic responses. Margaret Lackey helped fund 89 events last year and saw over 500 people trust Christ through crusades, health fairs, youth rallies, and Bible studies. For more information, call David Michel at (800) 748-1651, ext. 231 or (601) 292-3231.

COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY OUTREACH \$30,000



Reaching more than 21,000 college students in Mississippi, BSU programs are assisted by Margaret Lackey in mobilizing more than 300 short-term student missionaries serving across Mississippi and around the world. Funding also provides a witness to more than 400 international and ethnic students. For more information, contact Weaver McCracken at (800) 748-1651 or (601) 292-3299.

GARAYWA CAMP & CONFERENCE CENTER \$400,000



Home to nearly 2,000 girls each summer and a retreat getaway for more than 6,000 other guests, Garaywa is located in the heart of Clinton. Margaret Lackey helps this summer camp and year-round retreat center provide a quiet environment where spiritual learning and growth take place. Last year at Garaywa, 48 campers made a profession of faith, 19 attended to career missions, and 40 college students invested their summer as cabin leaders. For more information, call Roddy Reed at (601) 924-7059.

CENTRAL HILLS \$400,000



This Konchulko facility serves as a year-round retreat center and cool summer camp for nearly 2,000 campers and 30 student staff. Margaret Lackey funding assists Central Hills in providing a Christian camping experience for boys and girls ages 5 to 18. Last year, nearly 200 campers made a profession of faith as a result of their camping experience at Central Hills. For more information, call Jim Ray at (662) 289-9730.

DISASTER RELIEF \$60,000



Katrina, 9/11, and Haiti are reminders of why disaster relief ministries are so essential. Margaret Lackey trains nearly 300 first responders every year, and their efforts feed and witness to thousands in need of hope when disaster strikes. For more information, call Jim Didlake at (800) 748-1651, ext. 336, or (601) 292-5335.

PORT MINISTRY \$15,000



More than 7,000 international seamen from 37 countries visit Mississippi each year. Margaret Lackey provides a Christian witness to these sailors through port ministries in Gulfport and Pascagoula. For more information, call Adrian Turner at (228) 623-0103 or Charles Corey at (228) 868-2525.



God called over 1,000 short-term missionary volunteers last year.

Margaret Lackey Offering for State Missions



God called church planters to launch 114 new churches last year.

Margaret Lackey Offering for State Missions

Politics, Personhood, Pennies, and Prayer

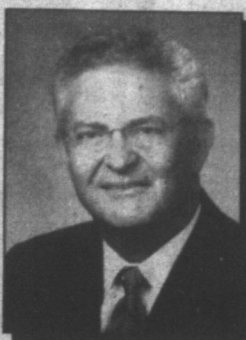
By Jimmy Porter

Miss. Baptist Christian Action Comm.

Covering Mississippi in Prayer is the theme for the Mississippi Baptist Convention when it meets October 26-27. The Bible commands us to "Pray without ceasing." For Christians, now is the time to pray and not just for Mississippi but for America. There is a multitude of reasons but we will concentrate on three.

POLITICS - "Nasty November" is quickly approaching. With national Election Day on the horizon, politics can get downright dirty between now and then. Control of the House of Representatives is at stake and both parties will do everything possible to come out a winner. Pray that Americans will go vote, and as one has said — take out the trash.

The current leaders in the White House, Senate, and the House of Representatives have an agenda that is far left of mainstream America. Collectively they have flushed morality, integrity, and common decency down the drain. I respect the Office of the President but not the values of the man who holds that office. Nor do we



Porter

\$826 billion dollar stimulus package. By the time you read this, Elena Kagan is the 112th Supreme Court Judge. She does not have experience as a judge. Her actions in the past should disqualify her but they haven't. Her selection will create havoc for years to come due to this being a lifetime appointment.

Immigration is a monstrous problem and will only get larger. Many are calling for a review and change of the 14th Amendment, which guarantees citizenship to anyone born on

need Nancy Pelosi or Harry Reid telling us what is best for our state.

National debt continues to escalate. Unemployment rates refuse to cooperate and get within the 8% range as promised by our President when he sold Congress on the

American soil. Illegal immigrants are exploiting this amendment. Anyone who has a simple solution to this problem has not adequately assessed the complexity of this issue. Pray that our leaders will find an appropriate response to this and the other national issues.

PERSONHOOD - The Personhood Amendment is scheduled to be on the Mississippi ballot in 2011. Many of you championed this cause and worked to give Mississippians an opportunity to express their views on abortion. This issue is now in the Mississippi courts due to an injunction being filed to keep it off the ballot. This comes as no surprise, and we must now wait until a verdict has been rendered.

Some have asked, "What can we do?" The answer is "to pray" for God's will to be done in this process. You cannot put pressure on judges but you can pray for them as they make their decision. The judges will not be deciding whether abortion is right or wrong, but they will be deciding if the Personhood Amendment is in violation of the Mississippi Constitution or not. Your prayers are needed.

PENNIES - Do you remember them? They are now out of the container and are being bagged, picked up and deposited. Hallelujah!!!! The pennies will begin creating some earnings and these monies will help life giving centers all across our state. When you see the MBCB staff give them a big THANK YOU for the labor-intensive hours given in removing and bagging the pennies. It has been a long journey but a great ministry has been born, and it will continue to save lives for years to come. You are to be commended for your efforts in making this vision become a reality. Pray that the dollars will be used wisely and that the practice of abortion will come to an end.

James wrote in his Epistle, "... The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." James 5:16b. America needs your fervent prayers now and your votes in November. Stand up and let your voices and prayers be heard.

The author can be contacted at 601-292-3332 or at jporter@christianaction.com.

Internet gambling gets big boost from House comm.

WASHINGTON (BP) — Congressional advocates for legalizing Internet gambling in the United States have made progress in their effort less than two months after rules implementing a 2006 law that cracked down on the practice finally took effect.

The Financial Services Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives voted 41-22 to forward to the full chamber the Internet Gambling Regulation, Consumer Protection and Enforcement Act, H.R. 2267.

The bill would have the effect of rescinding the four-year-old Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act, which largely barred online gambling in the United States by requiring financial institutions to block credit card and other payments to Internet wagering businesses.

Long-delayed regulations enforcing the law went into effect June 1.

The new online gambling measure, sponsored by Rep. Barney Frank, D-Mass., would both legalize such wagering and authorize the federal government to regulate it.

The committee's July 28 action came barely a week after Southern Baptist ethicist Richard Land and other pro-family leaders wrote congressional leaders to express their

opposition to the new bill, as well as a related proposal.

The latter measure — the Internet Gambling Regulation and Tax Enforcement Act, H.R. 4976 — would provide for taxation of gambling revenues in conjunction with Frank's legislation.

The House Ways and Means Committee is expected to consider H.R. 4976 in September, according to the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. Rep. Jim McDermott, D-Wash., is the bill's sponsor.

"Together, these bills propose the most aggressive expansion of gambling in American history, a misbegotten policy that would inflict an untold number of social costs on American families," Land and the others said in their July 20 letter.

Land is president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) of the Southern Baptist Convention, headquartered in Nashville. Among the other 13 signers of the letter were Tom McClusky, senior vice president of Family Research Council Action; Tom Minnery, senior vice president of Focus on the Family; and Penny Nance, chief executive officer of Concerned Women for America.

The federal government's new reliance upon gambling profits would inflict widespread socio-

economic costs, particularly on families, the foes of the House bills said in their letter.

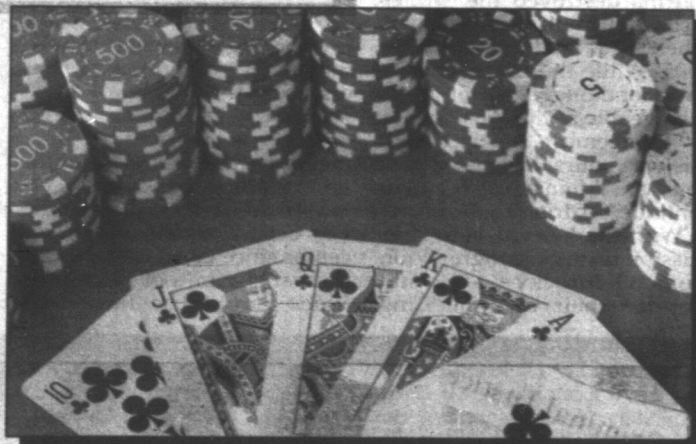
"The instant accessibility and anonymity of such [online gambling] sites make them a particularly alluring forum for teenagers and young adults; according to several studies, gambling addiction is the fastest growing addiction among young people," the letter said. "Internet gambling sites also provide a ready mechanism for criminals to illicitly transfer or launder money quickly, secretly and with a low chance of detection."

"The real gains [from enactment of the twin pieces of legislation] will go to Internet gambling interests, and the real costs will be borne by American households. Whatever the amount of revenue raised by these bills, we strongly believe that it would never be worth the price of such an expansive and irresponsible gambling policy."

The letter went to Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif.; Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev.; House Minority Leader John Boehner, R-Ohio, and Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky.

In the Financial Services Committee's vote on Frank's bill, only four Democrats opposed it. Seven Republicans voted for it.

Frank has argued the 2006 ban



inappropriately restricts personal freedom. He has said the bills McDermott and he are sponsoring would protect U.S. gamblers' consumer rights and make sure online wagering does not benefit only the operators, who are located primarily overseas.

In 2006, the ERLC was among the organizations that joined the National Collegiate Athletic Association and the major professional sports leagues for baseball, basketball, football and hockey in supporting the ban.

When President Bush signed into law a bill containing the Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act, the action dealt a dramatic

blow to online gambling companies. A couple of firms sold their American operations for \$1 apiece, and others saw their shares fall by as much as almost 60 percent on the London Stock Exchange.

Before the current restriction on Internet gambling was enacted, Americans were expected to pay \$5.9 billion, about half of the \$12 billion wagered worldwide on Internet gambling, to overseas online casinos in 2006, supporters of the ban said. Online gambling sites frequently act as fronts for money laundering, drug trafficking, and financing for terrorists, foes said.

Early life leads Rankin woman to reach out to others

JACKSON, Ms. (Special) — Addictions often leave a trail of destruction. Pain and sorrow are frequent companions of family members of those suffering from addictions. Mary Callahan learned from her own childhood experiences how difficult it was to find help.

"My mother was addicted to prescription drugs, and even though we attended church, they didn't know how to help either," says Callahan. From personal experiences, she desired to make a difference in the lives of women needing help by finding a Christ-centered program.

Out of Callahan's own childhood desire to help her mother grew a greater desire to minister to others and make an eternal difference in many lives. As a Mission Service Corps missionary, Callahan is now helping women and men overcome a variety of challenges through Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC), Christian Men's Job Corp (CMJC), and prison ministry programs.

CWJC and CMJC of Rankin County are non-profit, faith-based ministries where women and men in need are equipped for life and employment through

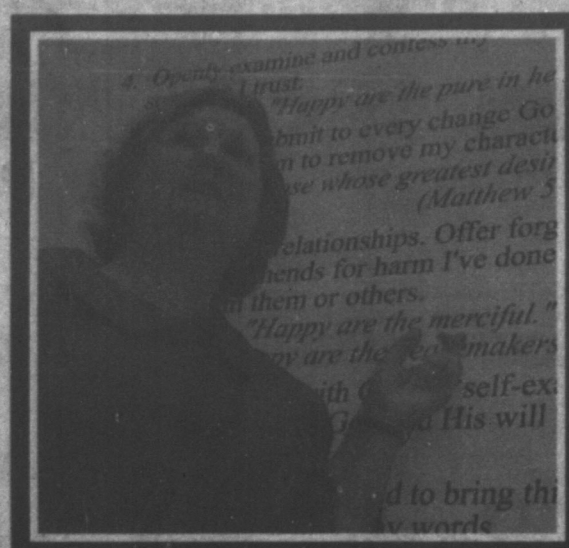
Jobs for Life classes, computer classes, GED tutoring, Bible study, and mentoring.

"I teach recovery programs and job readiness in two local prisons, Bible studies in the county jail, and classes for ex-offenders upon their release who face addictions" says Callahan. "Many ladies are coming to classes and need to make a new start. They need a mentor, a Christian friend, someone to be their cheerleader, and someone to point them to Jesus Christ."

Pray for God to give Callahan wisdom in making decisions for new classes. Pray more volunteers would be burdened to help those participating in CWJC/CMJC or those in prison by pointing them to God's saving grace.

Editor's note: This profile was first published in the September 2010 issue of Missions Mosaic magazine, a publication of the Woman's Missionary Union of the Southern Baptist Convention, when Callahan was chosen as the magazine's Missionary of the Week.

Callahan's ministries are supported in part by gifts to the Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering. To contact Callahan, write to P.O. Box 2115, Brandon, MS 39073.



Continued from ML Page 3

him pick which pair he wanted, and then went back and bought them," Frances said.

The seafarers aren't the only ones receiving a blessing from the Turners. The center also ministers to the port authority and more than sixty security workers. "Port authority here is a huge blessing. They want us here. They're very supportive and allow us to have the facility on the port," Adrian said.

A facility is certainly something for which the Turners are thankful. Hurricane Katrina destroyed the former facility and all its belongings when she made landfall in 2005. While the East site only had roof damage, nothing was salvageable at the West site.

"I remember saying, 'God, this was yours. If you want us here, you'll find a way for us to continue,'" Adrian said.

With the help of volunteer mission teams, a congregation from Kentucky — that stopped their own building



project to give money toward the center — and a generous gift from the Virginia Baptist Mission Board, the seamen's center was up and running mortgage-free six months after the storm.

According to Adrian, who has been the director of the center since 2004, their primary evangelism tool is a "Jesus Video Party." The Turners go

on board a ship, show the Jesus Film, pass out commitment forms, and give gifts to each seafarer. Last year, 73% of those who watched the video signed a commitment form to either give their life to Christ for the first time or rededicate their life to the Lord.

"We're trying to start Bible studies on board," Adrian said, and it's working. Andres, a

chief cook on a tanker, told the Turners he was interested in witnessing to other men at sea. They provided him with the necessary resources, and a Bible study got started. Three of the six men involved accepted the Lord during that study. When Andres returned to his home country, the Philippines, he planned to host a crusade.

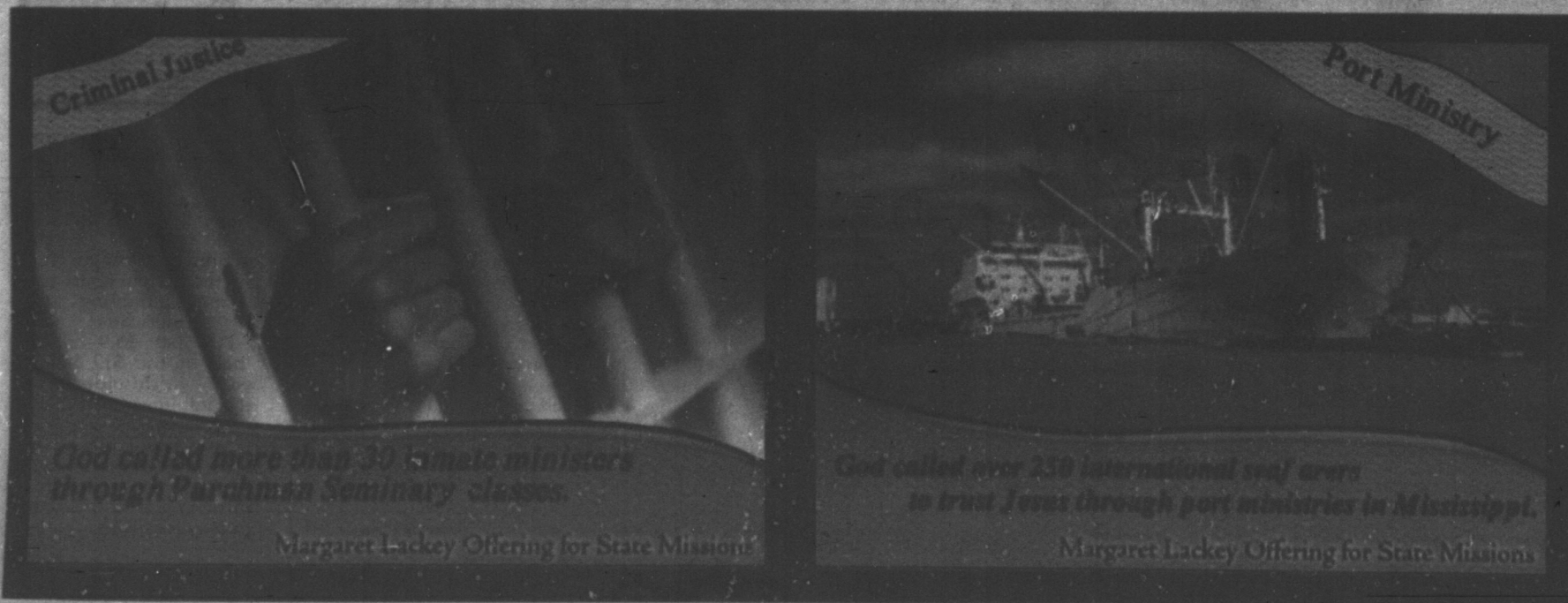
"We supported him. We got him 20,000 tracts. He trained a group of people to write and pass out the tracts home. When he sailed here the next time, the thing people on board him is if they could do bible study on board," he said.

While the Jackson Association provides Adrian's salary, gifts to the Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering help to pay for the center's

utilities and incidental costs. Additionally, it pays for gifts for the seamen and an appreciation dinner for the 24 volunteer teams that keep the center operating.

"I can't help but think of a seaman from Ukraine who came off his ship on a Monday night and said he wanted to be baptized 'like Jesus.' Three years before, he had gotten a Bible from the Mobile Seamen's center and been studying it. That's what it's all about," Adrian said.

Hagar is missions impact correspondent for the Mission Strategy Division of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. For more information on port ministry in Mississippi, contact the Men's Ministry Department at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3339 or toll free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 339. E-mail: dgann@mbcb.org.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



1. Tiptersville Church, Tiptersville

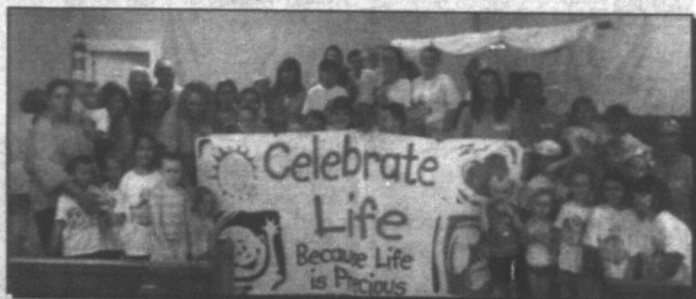


2. New Salem Church, McCall Creek

1. Tiptersville Church, Tiptersville: Shown are the participants.
2. New Salem Church, McCall Creek: July 12 - 16; shown are the participants.
3. South Louisville Church, Louisville: June 7 - 11; Baptist Children's Village offering of \$550; children also stuffed 50 animals which were donated to the LeBonheur Hospital, Memphis. Shown are the participants.
4. Correction: Hathorn Church, Jeff Davis County: Average attendance, 70; offering, \$849.19, which was donated to the Center for Pregnancy Choices of Lawrence County.



3. South Louisville Church, Louisville



4. Pleasant Hill Church, Tippah County

REVIVALS AND HOMECOMINGS

1. Beulah Church, Lexington: Revival, Aug. 22 - 25; Sun., 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Larry Edwards, speaker; Lyn Nations, pastor.
2. Euclatubba Church, Saltillo: Homecoming, Aug. 22; services, 10 a.m., followed by potluck lunch; Johnny Hearn, speaker; Shiloh Gospel Band, music; Scott Witcher, pastor.
3. Handsboro Church, Gulfport: Homecoming and 136th anniversary, Aug. 15; services, 10:30 a.m. followed by dinner on the grounds; Frank Lay, speaker; Scott Bourne, music.



6. First Church, Louisville

4. Concord Church, Pelahatchie: Revival, Aug. 22 - 25; Sun., 10 a.m., followed by lunch; Sun. - Wed., 7 p.m.; youth and children emphasis with meal, 6:30 p.m. Tues.; Brian Hill, speaker; Wayne Pinkerton, music; J.R. Lee, pastor.

5. Bethany Church, Potts Camp: Homecoming, Aug. 29, 11 a.m., followed by fellowship meal and song service. Doug Rakestraw, speaker; Donald Worsham, pastor.

6. First Church, Louisville: 175th anniversary, July 18; four previous pastors attending included Jimmy Porter, Donald Cotton, Chuck Pourciau, and Don Boone; activities included a fellowship time, recognition of guests, music, and a meal. Shown are Cotton, pastor Brett Golson, Boone, and Pourciau.

7. Short Creek Church, Yazoo City: Homecoming, Aug. 15; services, 11 a.m., followed by covered dish dinner; Michael Giles, speaker; Joe Danny Martin, music; Bill Hutto, pastor.

8. First Church, Union: 125th anniversary, July 11; 300 - 400 in attendance; shown are the participants.



8. First Church, Union



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COLLEGE NEWS

1. Mississippi College's Flowood Center is hosting a series of Lunch and Learn sessions Sept. 10, 17, and 24. Sessions will help attendees develop their resumes, interview skills, and social networks. Each session is 30 to 40 minutes and there is no charge.
2. Mississippi College's new Flowood Center is set for an August 16 grand opening, and inviting the public and community leaders to attend the ceremonies. The event runs from 10 a.m. until noon at the MC center at 115 Laurel Park Cove. The eight-classroom center is next door to the Flowood Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center off Lakeland Drive.

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BSU team makes VBS possible where once impossible

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor

Angie Boydston, consultant in the Sunday School department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, offers this surprising statistic: less than one third of the Baptist churches in Mississippi report having a Vacation Bible School. "There is a niche we don't hear anything about," said Boydston. "There are churches in the state which have 40 to 50 attending on an average Sunday morning, and 90% of those are senior adults, and they think they can't do VBS."

But, because of a joint partnership between the Sunday School department and the Collegiate Ministry department, just over 250 kids were able to participate in VBS this summer.

The team consisted of Sarah Grace Yeatman, Maben; Sarah Parker, Saltillo; Onnika Johnson, Mooreville; Brandi Vaughn, Brookhaven; and Jacob Blair, Salem, Ill. These students served from June 1 - July 31. Locations served included Clarksdale at Spruce Street Church and a backyard Bible club at a local housing project; Westwood Mission, Eupora; Mt. Olive Church, Okolona; Hebron Church, Sardis; New Providence Church, Hazelhurst; Choctaw Association; and the Naval Air Station in Meridian.

"We've spent the summer doing Vacation Bible School with small churches all over the state," said Johnson. "We've done a couple that didn't have any youth at all, and it was great to be able to invite children and their families in, especially for Family Night, when we could all get together."

"This week [at the housing project in Clarksdale] we're

doing a backyard Bible study, which is totally different from a normal VBS. There is a lot less structure, and the kids meet here on the property in the clubhouse," said Blair.

When asked what brought them together as a team, Yeatman said, "Through our BSU, we learn what's available for summer missions — what we can do, where we can go. There is a student impact team that stays here in Mississippi. So we applied for it, went through interviews, and then we got our assignments. But for me, I felt like God was working for the last couple of years to get me ready for it."

"I feel like God has been working in our hearts for maybe two years to prepare us," said Parker, agreeing.

"Interestingly, later we discovered that all four girls applied for the same assignment," said Vaughan.

"I get the question all the time: 'If you're from Illinois, how did you get all the way down here to Mississippi?'" said Blair. "Well, I go to Blue Mountain College, and the BSU gave the information I needed. Blue Mountain feels like a second home."

The students were quick to share some of the high points of their summer experience.

"A couple of weeks ago we had a boy in our group, Jerry [not his real name]," said Johnson. "He was thought to be autistic. He didn't communicate very well. He knew his surroundings, he knew what was going on, but with people he didn't know, he wouldn't look at them. He was a sweet boy, but just didn't communicate. Then one day, I was with the kids when they were about to have snacks, and when I



GO LONG! — BSU summer missionary Jacob Blair (right) prepares to pass the football to some young men at a housing project in Clarksdale during a backyard Bible club. The BSU VBS team was in part funded by gifts to the Margaret Lackey Offering for State Missions. (Photo by Tony Martin)

walked by Jerry, he looked right at me, smiled, and laughed. And he was like that the rest of the week."

"During the first week, we had a little boy who had been through a lot — someone in his family had just died," said Blair. "His cousin died in a car accident. During the service, he'd just run around everywhere and he didn't want to leave his family. So for a couple of days he went to the class with his sister. Then on the last day, the little boy came up to me and started to cry. 'Don't leave,' he said. But I told him I might see him again one day."

"It's just been great meeting the people," said Yeatman. "The people in these churches are just amazing. They've been so helpful, and taken us in with open arms. No complaints — they wanted to do as much as they could."

"What really impacted me was that the first week we had three

salvations," said Parker. "Two of them were children, and another was a youth worker. We had really tried to minister to his family. The workers were in the classes with the kids, and the Bible studies were for the kids. But what was amazing was that he ended up accepting Christ that week, even though we weren't necessarily talking to him. They were watching us, and listening, and still got something out of it."

"What we learned was that even when it didn't seem like the kids were paying attention, they really were," said Johnson. "All eyes were on us. We were kind of the outsiders, but we didn't realize how much people looked at us. We never realized how God would use us to touch others."

Vaughn noted just how caring people were. "The Sunday we got to Sardis, I found out my dad checked into the hospital with

heart trouble. He's fine, and everything worked out, but the people there knew about it before we even got there. All week, people were asking me, 'How's your dad? We've been praying for him.' All week long they were constantly checking on him."

The Collegiate Ministry Department petitioned for funds from the Margaret Lackey Offering for State Missions. Those funds were used to provide the means for the BSU team to minister this summer.



STAFF CHANGES

1. First Church, Grenada, has called Michael Lee as pastor effective June 13. He comes with his wife Jenny and three children: Elizabeth, Ian, and Rebecca.
2. Parkway Church, Hernando, has called Tom Marshall as pastor. He attended Troy University in Alabama and is completing his Master of Divinity degree. He served in the U.S. Navy for 20 years and has served at Cross Roads Church, Arlington, Tenn., DeSoto Woods Church, Southaven, and was serving Parkway as Administrator and Education Minister. Shown are Jacob, Cindy, Lauren, Marshall, Nathan, and Caitlyn.



2. The Marshalls

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Jones County Bible Conference 2010



Dr. John Sullivan
Executive Director,
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Convention



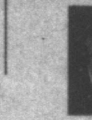
Dr. Junior Hill
Baptist,
Bartlett, AL



Dr. Ted Taylor
Pastor
Pensacola, FL



Dr. Herb Reavis
Pastor
Tomball, TX



Dr. James Merritt
Pastor
Enid, OK

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

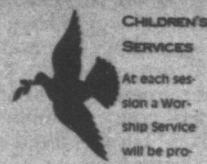
Sunday, August 15 — Morning
9:00a.m. — Dr. John Sullivan
Dr. Junior Hill

Sunday, August 15 — Evening
6:00p.m. — Dr. Junior Hill
Dr. Ted Taylor

Monday, August 16 — Evening
6:30p.m. — Dr. Herb Reavis

Tuesday, August 17 — Evening
6:30p.m. — Dr. James Merritt

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BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Demonstrate Kindness

2 Samuel 9:1-13

By Tony Martin

God expects His people to show kindness to others. Kindness is an attribute of God, but one that, unfortunately, isn't always consistently found in Christians. Christians can act unkindly - they can be self-absorbed and thoughtless. Worse, some can even be spiteful and malicious, embracing perceived wrongs and holding grudges. But the Bible teaches that we, as Christians, are to be models of God's kindness towards all people, and this is seen in this sweet story of David and Mephibosheth. God's kindness involves mercy and favor towards undeserving people - certainly a helpful lesson to our churches and Christians today. In addition, we can see a foreshadowing of the coming of the Son of David, Who can and does give spiritual riches to lost sinners.

Determine to Show Kindness (2 Sam. 9:1-3)

Ziba was the chief steward of

Saul's estate, sort of a manager. When questioned by David, Ziba answered straightforwardly, but would later be seen to be a liar (2 Sam. 16:1-4). Notice that David wasn't taking pity on Mephibosheth because he was crippled. Mephibosheth was lame because his nurse dropped him and he was maimed (2 Sam. 4:4). David wanted to honor Mephibosheth's father, Jonathan - he was doing what he did for Jonathan's sake. David had made a pledge of support to Saul and to Jonathan, and wanted to fulfill that pledge (1 Sam. 20:14-15, 42).

Jonathan was dead, so David couldn't show any kindness toward Jonathan himself. By showing kindness to Mephibosheth, David was giving something to Mephibosheth he neither deserved nor had earned.

Kindness is a choice that David exercised. In those days,



Martin

most kings tried to wipe out the families of their rivals to prevent any descendants from seeking the throne. But David had determined in advance that he was going to honor Jonathan's memory with no strings attached. Kindness can be shown even to someone who is a perceived enemy.

Seek Opportunities to Show Kindness (2 Sam. 9:4-6)

Once David had determined that he was going to show kindness, he sought out Mephibosheth with the purpose of finding out how he could show kindness to him. Imagine what Mephibosheth's thoughts were as he was called to stand before David. If Mephibosheth had listened to his grandfather, he might've feared for his life; but if he had listened to his father Jonathan, he would know that he had reason to be excited.

Mephibosheth bowed before David, taking a position of extreme humility. But Mephibosheth didn't know what blessings were to come next.

It would've been easy for

David to have made a mushy, non-committal decision to "feel" kindly toward Mephibosheth. Instead, we see that he took concrete steps to show kindness. David sought out ways to express kindness, being proactive and diligent. Sometimes opportunities to show kindness fall into our laps; other times, we have to make our own opportunities.

Think about how God acted toward us. God's kindness is undeserved. There is nothing Mephibosheth could have offered David - nor is there anything we can offer God that would "cause" Him to love us any more than He already does.

Practice Kindness (2 Sam. 9:7-13)

David's initial comment to Mephibosheth was "don't be afraid." David, in effect, adopted Mephibosheth, giving him the land that his father Jonathan would have inherited from Saul, and then giving him a place at his table. Mephibosheth's response - comparing himself to a "dead dog" - shows the utter humility on his part.

David, having nothing to do with this, called Ziba and spends verses 9 and 10 explaining what he was going to do for

Mephibosheth. It couldn't have been easy to care for a man with two lame feet, but that is just exactly what David promised to do. Mephibosheth already had Ziba, his fifteen sons, and twenty servants working for him, but now he had all of David's resources on top of that.

David was in a position to mightily bless Mephibosheth. He was the benefactor of David's mercy and grace. The parallel to what God does for us is obvious - we, too, receive unsearchable riches in Christ (Ephesians 3:8). God supplies our needs out of His heavenly treasury!

We see here, on the part of David, a totally selfless act. David expected no return for his kindness. In our lives, whatever kindness we can express to others should be a reflection of the grace God has shown us. It should never take into account the gratitude of the recipient, or even if the recipient deserved it. Kindness, in its purest form, expects nothing in return.

Scripture cited is from the New International Version.

Martin is the Associate Editor of The Baptist Record.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Relationships: The Reconciliation Factor

2 Corinthians 5:11-7:4

By Laura Leathers

Years ago I read a book by Joyce Landorf Heatherley entitled *Irregular People*. The title caught my attention. Who or what were irregular people? Long ago the book disappeared from my shelf and I don't remember the author's definition. Perhaps an irregular person could be defined as someone who is difficult, brash, critical, or hard to please. We've all had "irregular people" in our lives and often this leads to a strained or fractured relationship. How is this relationship restored? The Apostle Paul would say through the ministry of reconciliation—grace upon grace. The first step is to...

Reach Out in Openness 2 Cor. 5:11-13

The issue of Paul's integrity

is still at the forefront as he continues his letter to the Corinthians. Were they going to believe and follow the false teachers or the godly teaching of the Apostle Paul? It is the "fear of the Lord," a reverence for God, which is the spiritual foundation and motivation for Paul's "persuading men."

The more time you spend with someone, the better you get to know them. Paul wrote, "And I hope that we are made manifest also in your consciences (vs. 11)." He is saying I've spent time with you through working, teaching, talking, traveling, and fellowshiping. I've opened my heart wide to you—you've seen my life. Their consciences should have been opened to see and recognize he was a man of truth, unlike his opponents. Paul was



Leathers

reaching out to the Corinthians, not for the praise of men, but "it is for God."

Respond to Christ's Love - 2 Cor. 5:14-16

"The love of Christ controls us," wrote Paul. The word control used in this context "refers to pressure that causes action. Paul emphasized the strength of his desire to offer his life to the Lord" (MacArthur). Then he writes, "one died for all" referring to Christ's substitutionary death. William Barclay put it this way: "When you consider the reasons Christ died, Christ died that we might die (v. 14) and He died that we might live (vv. 15-17), you cannot help but love Him."

Jesus Christ took away God's wrath and satisfied God's justice as a perfect sacrifice. "He died for all." Not for some, but for all. With this truth how will you respond to Christ's love and reach out to others because of His love?

Remember God's Work in Christ - 2 Cor. 5:17-21

The metamorphosis of a caterpillar to a butterfly is an excellent illustration of a transformed life. It is a new creature! "In Christ", a term Paul uses frequently, there is regeneration. The old Adam, the head of the old creation is buried and the Head of the new creation is Christ. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

God through Christ reconciled man. "In the Bible, reconciliation is the word used to refer to the process by which God changes human beings and adjusts them to the standard of His perfect character" (web: Grace Notes).

Because believers have been reconciled to "God through Christ" we are to extend the ministry of reconciliation. "Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ to proclaim to the good news, 'be reconciled to God.' It is God's work in and through Christ!

Reassure Others of Your Desires - 2 Cor. 6:1; 7:2-4

Our Scripture text ends with Paul reminding the Corinthians

he had not wronged, corrupted, or taken advantage of anyone. He was a minister of integrity and he ministered with integrity. His motive was not to condemn but to forgive. Paul was dealing with a fractured relationship and his heart's desire was for the Corinthians to recognize the truth and desire reconciliation.

"Great is my confidence in you... I am overflowing with joy in all our affliction." Paul was confident of God's ongoing work in the lives of the members at the church in Corinth. God is always at work (John 5:19). "For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:6).

"Ministry is not easy. If we are to succeed, we must be motivated by the fear of the Lord, the love of Christ, and the commission that He has given to us. What a privilege it is to serve Him" (Barclay). Is the ministry of reconciliation a part of your life?

Leathers is a member of First Church, Durant.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

THE BAPTIST Record

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if

submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items are generally not publishable. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape-, building-, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

HELP NEEDED

Editor: With August every year comes the Sturgis South Bike Rally in Sturgis. Every year, Mississippi Baptists work to reach the tens of thousands of bikers that descend on this small town. I would like to invite your readers to partner with us this year.

There are few mission opportunities like this one, where people from all walks of life converge on one place for an entire weekend. Many of these people desperately need Christ. I am convinced it is our duty to make Him known to them. Please consider spending all or part of your weekend with us in Sturgis on this mission field.

A knowledge of motorcycles is not necessary. I don't own a bike or plan to own one, but I know that Jesus loves bikers and that's all I need to know to do this work.

We need workers to help in different ministries such as water booths, family outreach, minor first aid, and street evangelism. All of the materials are

provided by Mississippi Baptists and local churches.

We will have a time of orientation and prayer at 7 p.m. on August 19, at Sturgis Baptist Church. The work will begin on Friday afternoon and last all day Saturday. For more information, call me at (662) 312-3788 or send an email to rmord@hotmail.com.

Thank you so much for your prayers and efforts.

Russell Mord, pastor
Sturgis Church, Sturgis

THANKS, MISS. BAPTISTS

Editor:

I am writing to say a big thank you for sending 42 Mississippians to bless those of us working in Southeast Asia with the International Mission Board. They worked with our children and youth, and provided health care for those attending our annual meeting. They represented Mississippi very well.

I was especially proud of them since I am a Mississippian. The team included several friends, which

was icing on the cake for me!

Mississippi Baptists have so much for which to be thankful. One is the money set aside in the Margaret Lackey Offering for State Missions that mobilizes our own to serve in missions. What a blessing that is to those going and those receiving.

Name withheld for security reasons

SPECIAL ACCOUNT

Editor:

I write to express full agreement with missions director Paul Blanchard of Winston Association, who recommended in a letter to the editor that every Mississippi Baptist family open a savings account similar to a Christmas Club account and make regular contributions to it in support of our missions offerings.

My wife Martha and I have opened a special account at our bank with a \$100 deposit. We are adding, by the Lord's grace, to this account during the year. As has been said, "Things look hard by the yard, but a cinch by

the inch," so even with a few dollars each week or as often as you receive your income, put something into the account. During the year, you will have funds for the Margaret Lackey State Missions Offering, the Annie Armstrong Offering for North American Missions, the Lottie Moon Offering for International Missions, the Baptist Children's Village, and the World Hunger Offering.

I am so thankful that at our annual associational meeting on October 19 of last year that \$480 was given to the Children's Village. At our second session on October 20, \$282.69 was given for World Hunger. Our Lord still blesses giving (Luke 6:38 and Malachi 3:10). Amen!

Let me also suggest that our churches prayerfully consider the practice called, The Five M's of Giving: Mail Missions Monies of Monday Mornings. The sooner we send to the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, the sooner the funds can be put to work for our Lord.

Grady D. Crowell, missions dir.

Clarke Association, Quitman

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.



Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

Christian aid workers slaughtered in Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan (BP) — Ten workers affiliated with a Christian aid group were murdered in the rugged mountains of Afghanistan after providing eye care to people in a remote area of the country.

International Assistance Mission (IAM), an openly Christian charity, has operated in Afghanistan for 44 years, negotiating with the Soviets, the mujahedeen government, and then the Taliban for permission to continue its work assisting people in need of care — but on Aug. 5, only one member of a team survived an ambush by several men wielding guns.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the deaths of six Americans, one German, one Briton, and two Afghans, though police have not ruled out an attack by thieves.

A spokesman for the Southern Baptist International Mission Board (IMB) confirmed that no IMB personnel were involved.

The team, which included a 12th member, an Afghan, who earlier left the group to return home on his own, had set out for the remote Parun Valley of Nurestan province in three Land Rovers and then left their vehicles to trek 100 miles through the Hindu Kush mountains, The Washington Post reported.

Once they had completed their work they were traveling back through snow and rain when they were attacked. The survivor, a driver named Saifullah, said the gunmen lined up the team members and began to execute them. Saifullah's life was spared after he shouted allegiance to Allah, The Post said.

"We are heartbroken by the loss of these heroic, generous people," U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said. "We condemn in the strongest possible terms this senseless act. We also condemn the Taliban's transparent attempt to justify the unjustifiable by making false accusations about their activities in Afghanistan."

The Taliban said the medical team was handing out Bibles written in Dari, but

Dirk Frans, executive director of the aid organization, denied the claim.

"We're not here to proselytize, hand out Bibles or whatever," Frans said. "Our witness is in doing this work under extreme conditions, for people who otherwise have no chance for getting anything."

The Post said IAM's 50 foreign volunteers and 500 Afghan staff members operate in seven Afghan provinces with a program budget of more than three million dollars. Through four decades of service, four foreign aid workers had been killed and none of the Afghan staff had been killed until the recent massacre.

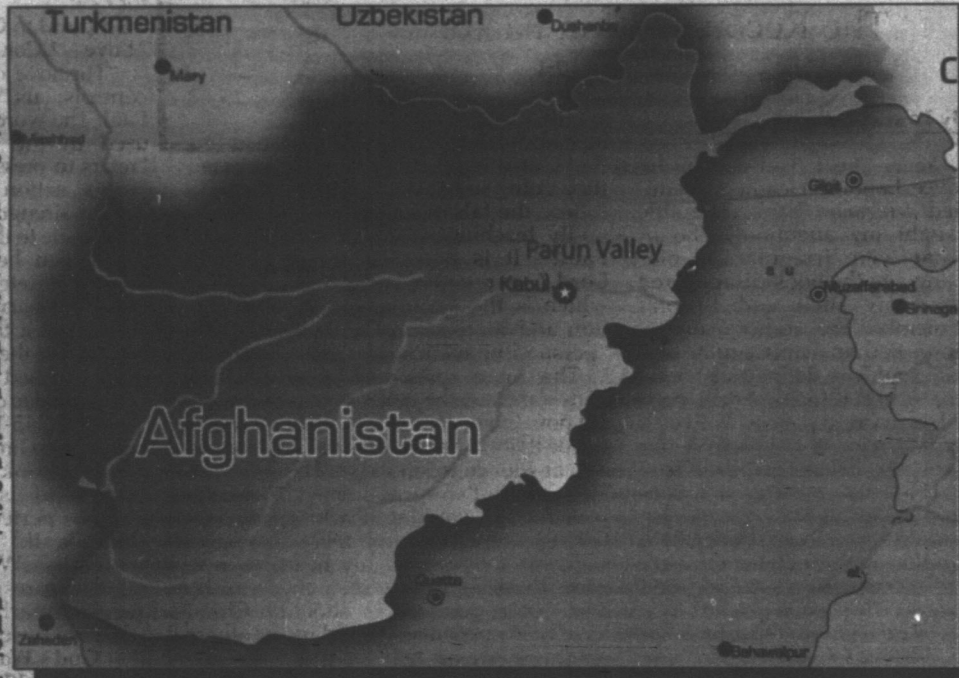
Among those who died was the team's leader, Tom Little, an optometrist from New York who had worked in the country for more than 30 years and was an inspiration to many who joined the team, CNN.com said.

Little had established a system with his wife in which he would give her a 30-second call every 12 hours to let her know he was OK. When two cycles went by without a call, Libby Little said she knew something was wrong.

Also killed was Thomas Grams, a dentist from Durango, Co., who gave up his private practice to do relief work; Glen Lapp, a Mennonite nurse from Pennsylvania who helped organize mobile eye camps; Dan Terry of Wisconsin, who was a liaison with aid organizations and governments; and Brian Carderelli, a videographer from Pennsylvania.

Cheryl Beckett, a student at Indiana Wesleyan University, had been working in Afghanistan since 2005, translating for women patients before she was killed. Her father is pastor of Woodlawn Christian Church in Knoxville, Tn.

Another woman who died was Karen



Woo, a general surgeon from Britain who gave up a comfortable life in London to promote maternal health care in remote regions. "Her motivation was purely humanitarian. She was a humanist and had no religious or political agenda," Woo's family said in a statement.

Daniela Beyer of Germany, a translator, also was killed along with Afghans Mahram Ali, a watchman, and Jawed, a cook who went by only one name.

The Christian Science Monitor said the attack has highlighted the trend of rising civilian casualties in Afghanistan and raised concerns among international aid workers that the Taliban may try to prevent future relief efforts.

"Many [aid agencies] had until now assumed that the north of Afghanistan

was a comparatively safe area to work in," The Independent newspaper in Britain said. "Aid workers spoke yesterday of their worries that the attack signaled increased hostility towards foreign charities and relief agencies."

The Post said police in Badakhshan province have not ruled out that thieves unaffiliated with the Taliban could have committed the crime because the victims' belongings were ransacked after they were killed. The Taliban in the past has captured victims and then bartered for their release instead of killing them immediately.

International Assistance Mission said it will continue its work in Afghanistan despite the devastating loss, the group said.

Steadfastness blessed by God with return to home

NORTH AFRICA (BP) — Ibrahim (not his real name) wasn't ready to die. He wasn't ready to back down either.

For months, Islamic authorities had ignored the tiny house church he started with a handful of former Muslims in a dusty, desolate village on the outskirts of town — but the 26-year-old Arab farmer's brazen evangelism had become a problem.

The church was growing, and it was now turning too many heads and winning too many souls for authorities to overlook. Today, they'd come to end it.

Ibrahim's eyes scanned the mob of about 20 men, led by the village's chief, Karim (not his real name) sent to confront him. Ibrahim recognized many of their faces. They were his neighbors, even friends. Now as Karim's hired thugs, Ibrahim saw only hatred in their eyes. Armed with knives, machetes, spears and guns, the men stood ready to kill if necessary.

Acting on Karim's orders, the mob had already trashed the round kuzi (coo-zee) where Ibrahim and the other believers met for church, ripping apart the hut's thatched roof and smashing its mud-brick walls.

Karim then turned his attention to a box of Bibles and study materials his men had taken from the church. He was going to burn the Bibles. That's when something inside Ibrahim snapped.

Face off

"We're not going to let you burn those books," Ibrahim exclaimed as he charged from the huddle of believers to face off with the chief.

"You've become heretics in the way of Islam," Karim shot back. "You've become believers in Jesus. This would have been different if you kept it to yourself, but you're telling other people, and I can't allow that to happen."

As he argued with Karim, Ibrahim's mind flashed to passages in the Bible where he'd read of the beheading of John the Baptist and the torture and crucifixion of Jesus. Ibrahim realized he wasn't afraid.

He was, however, tired of talking. Ibrahim grabbed the box of Scriptures from Karim, walked briskly back to the believers, and calmly stared down the mob.

"We were full of the Holy Spirit," Ibrahim recounted. "We knew that if they threw a spear at us or stabbed us or shot us and we died, we would be in heaven."

The mob yelled at them, but a physical confrontation did not occur. Ibrahim and the believers mounted horses, rode a triumphant lap around the village and took off.

The victory was short-lived.

Witch hunt

Within days the believers were ordered to appear for trial before the town's Islamic council. They knew it would be a witch hunt, run by 80 of the area's most powerful Muslim leaders. The believers chose to go anyway. They weren't ashamed of the hope they had in Christ and wanted everyone to know it.

"We've called you here to hold Islamic court over you," explained the head imam, who presided over the council.

"How can you do that?" Ibrahim asked. "We're not Muslims."

For the next three days the council grilled the believers about their belief in Jesus, why they had left Islam, and why they so fervently shared the Gospel with anyone who would listen.

Some of the most incriminating evidence came when the imam produced a Gospel cassette that Karim had managed to steal from the church. The imam played the tape, a condensed version of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, for the entire council to hear.

Most people in the audience laughed. Ibrahim smiled knowingly. "We've really made it big," he whispered to one of the believers. "We're actually evangelizing all of the major religious leaders in town because they're listening to our tape."

In the end, the trial boiled down to a single question: "Will you return to Islam?" The believers' answer was an unequivocal "no." They immediately were banished from their village, the town and the entire county. To return was an automatic death sentence.

Loudspeakers on the town's mosques blared the believers' names, publicly marking them as kuffar.

"It means you are absolutely worthless, an absolute heretic," said Chuck Castle (not his real name), a Southern Baptist worker. "You can't get jobs, you can't get married, and no one will live with you. You are a complete outcast."

People were told not to meet, eat, or drink with the believers. Worse, their marriages and children were now considered illegitimate. Even in death they would



DRAMATIC CHANGE — Karim (center, not his real name), the village chief who threatened to murder Ibrahim (not his real name), thanks the believers he once persecuted for installing a well that provides his village with clean water. (BP/IMB photo)

remain outcasts, the burial rights to their family cemeteries revoked.

Eight years ago, it was Castle who led Ibrahim to the Lord and disciplined him but now, in a heartbreaking twist of circumstances, the doctor found himself helping Ibrahim leave the area. He was the only friend who volunteered to drive Ibrahim to the desert so he wouldn't have to make the 30-mile trek on foot.

Taking his friend and church-planting partner to a place where he would be forced to live as a nomad is a painful memory, one that still brings tears to Castle's eyes.

"There was nothing out there," he said. "It's extremely hard when people that you helped lead to Christ are persecuted and you can't walk through that persecution with them... and you're broken on their behalf. You're also moved by the joy they show in evangelizing the very people that were persecuting them."

Homecoming

Barred from their homes, the believers and their families survived in ramshackle tents near the county border. Ibrahim's son was only a few months

old at the time, and with no source of clean water, day-to-day life under the blistering North African sun was brutal.

Being outcasts did come with one advantage: They were free to worship God, and He didn't forget them.

A year later they received a surprise letter from Karim granting them permission to return home. There was no explanation, but Ibrahim didn't need one. He knew God was giving them a new place to live just like He did for the Israelites after they wandered in the wilderness.

Instead of moving back to their old village, the believers founded a new village a few miles away.

Now free from the fear of persecution, and living as the area's first, and only Christian community, the believers' faith blossomed.

They soon realized they were missing something. "God began to give us a vision to evangelize other peoples," Ibrahim said. "No matter how far it was, we wanted to go to that place and tell people about Jesus."

Today, church members estimate they've shared the Gospel with more than 5,000 people. At least 90 have been baptized. Under Ibrahim's leadership,

Legislators fear 'Don't ask, Don't Tell' doomed in lame duck session

WASHINGTON (BP) — Members of the U.S. House and Senate Armed Services Committees have warned that Democratic leaders may try to overturn the military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy during a lame duck session of Congress so as not to offend conservative voters prior to the election.

The House already has passed but the Senate has yet to vote on a defense authorization bill containing an amendment that almost certainly would reverse the military's prohibition against open homosexual service. If it makes it through the Senate, it would have to pass the House once again because the two bills have differences.

Among those differences, the Senate version has an amendment that would eliminate a ban

on privately funded abortions in military health care facilities.

With their House majority at stake and a host of Senate races rated as toss-ups, Democrats may decide to punt any decision on the bill — along with several other controversial ones — until after Nov. 2.

Sen. James Inhofe, a Republican from Oklahoma and member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said he's prepared to offer amendments striking the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and pro-abortion language from the bill. That could put some Senate Democrats — especially those from conservative states running for re-election — in a tough spot.

"[Senate Majority Leader] Harry Reid is very concerned about bringing up the defense

authorization bill, because if he does, we're going to have these amendments," Inhofe said. "That means that those people coming up for an election in November and I'm talking about the wobbly Democrats who want to do what the Democrats say to do but they know how the people at home feel. They don't want to [be] on record, so I think for that reason he may just wait and bring it up in the lame duck session."

Rep. Todd Akin, R-Mo., agreed. "Our big window of danger is after the elections, particularly if you have people who have lost their election and they don't care," Akin said. "We've got a tremendous danger in a lame duck."

Inhofe and Akin made their comments during a webcast

sponsored by Family Research Council Action titled, Mission Compromised: How the military is being used to advance a radical agenda.

The bill's language regarding Don't Ask, Don't Tell would repeal the policy only after a survey of military personnel is complete and only after President Obama, Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Michael Mullen have OK'd a repeal.

All three, though, are on record as supporting a repeal. Gates said in February, "The question before us is not whether the military prepares to make this change, but how we best prepare it for it."

"You keep hearing, 'No, it's not a done deal yet.' Well, I sug-

gest that it is," Inhofe said. "They've already made up their minds."

Inhofe said he recently returned from a trip to Iraq in which military personnel expressed to him concern that their voice isn't being heard. He said personnel told him, "We want to be heard and now we find out that ... they've already decided how it's gonna turn out."

Mullen backs a repeal despite the fact that the chiefs of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines — all members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff — apparently are not on board.

In May all four military chiefs reiterated their support for completing review of the current policy before Congress acts.

Steadfastness blessed by God with return to home